

XXX.—*Notes on some African Birds.* By R. B. SHARPE, F.L.S. &c., Librarian to the Zoological Society of London.

THE receipt of several interesting birds from the Fantee country, in Western Africa, sent to me by my friend Governor Ussher, enables me to write a few words on two of the species mentioned in the present paper—while the identity of the *Crithagra* has been a rock to split upon for many ornithologists, and the additional information respecting these puzzling birds will, I believe, be read with some interest.

Fam. **Muscicapidæ.**

Genus **BUTALIS.**

1. *Butalis epulata.*

Butalis epulata, Cass. Proc. Phil. Acad. 1850, p. 326; Sharpe, Ibis, 1870, p. 480; *id.* Cat. Afr. B. p. 42.
Muscicapa epulata, Hartl. Orn. W. Afr. pp. 96, 276 (1856); Cass. Proc. Phil. Acad. 1859, p. 51; Hartl. J. f. O. 1861, p. 169; Gray, Hand-l. of B. pt. i. p. 322.

Hab. Gaboon; Moonda, Muni, and Camma rivers (*Du Chaillu*); Fantee (*Swanzy, Aubrin*).

This is the smallest Flycatcher of the genus *Butalis*; and it is for the purpose of describing the young bird that I have here introduced it, as this stage of plumage has not yet been noticed. In the last collection brought home by Governor Ussher was a specimen which had been obtained on the boundary between Denkera and Ashantee, near the rivers Orffee, on the 20th of April 1871, by Mr. Aubrin, who says that the natives call it "Abrodomeh." The following is a description of the bird in question:—

Above dusky grey, covered with little pointed spots of buff, deeper on the rump and upper tail-coverts, all these spots being margined with black; cheeks similarly marked; wing-coverts coloured and spotted like the back, but the spots much deeper, almost golden in colour; quills blackish, the secondaries plainly edged with buff; tail blackish, with little buff tips to the feathers; under surface of the body whitish, the flanks and under tail-coverts tinged with buff, the throat and breast presenting a mottled appearance, owing to the feathers being narrowly edged with grey; under wing-coverts white varied with grey near the edge of the wing; bill black, yellow at the base and gape; feet dark brown. Total length 4.2 inches, culmen 0.45, wing 2.25, tail 1.65, tarsus 0.5.

Fam. Fringillidæ.

Genus CRITHAGRA.

2. *Crithagra leucoptera*, n. sp.

C. supra olivaceo-brunnea, uropygio concolori vix pallidiore, plumis obsolete brunneo saturatiore longitudinaliter striatis: tectricibus alarum dorso concoloribus, medianis et majoribus albo terminatis, fasciam duplicem alarem formantibus: remigibus brunneis, extus olivaceo limbatis, secundariis intimis albedo marginatis: cauda brunnea anguste olivaceo marginata: facie laterali tota olivaceo-brunnea, pileo concolori: mento albedo, profuse brunneo notato: gula ima conspicue alba: corpore subtus sordide brunneo, abdomine pallidiore, olivaceo-viridi vix lavato; subcaudalibus albidis; subalaribus sordide brunneis: rostro carneo: pedibus rufescenti-brunneis.

Above dull earthy, the rump slightly paler and more grey, and a gloss of olive-yellow pervading the whole of the upper surface, the centres of the feathers rather darker, producing an obsolete striped appearance, which is more distinct on the crown; wing-coverts coloured like the back, the greater and median coverts tipped with whitish, forming a double alar bar; quills and tail brown, edged with olive, the secondaries being edged and tipped with whitish; sides of the face and neck brown like the back; throat white, the chin thickly covered with little brown spots; rest of the under surface of the body brown, the abdomen and under tail-coverts much paler and inclining to whitish, the flanks brown, with a slight tinge of olive-yellow spread over the breast and belly; under wing-coverts brown like the sides of the body; bill flesh-colour, legs reddish brown. Total length 5·7 inches, culmen 0·55, wing 2·95, tail 2·45, tarsus 0·7.

Hab. South Africa (*Layard*).

Among all the descriptions of the grey finches from South Africa I have failed to find one which agrees with the bird above characterized. The white bars on the wing are a distinguishing feature; the spots on the chin are also very distinct.

I now add a few remarks on some of these birds, as Dr. Finsch and I do not agree as to the correctness of the names assigned by me in my Catalogue, so that a few words will be necessary to uphold the conclusions at which I have there arrived. On sending him one of the types of my *Poliospiza crocopygia* to examine, Dr. Finsch expressed his opinion that it is the true *Crithagra albogularis* of Smith. I am willing to

admit the bird as a thin-billed *Crithagra*, and I classify the grey South-African species under dispute as follows:—

- a. uropygio dorso concolori 1. *C. leucoptera*.
 b. uropygio flavo.
 a'. major: uropygio viridi-flavo 2. *C. albogularis*.
 b'. minor: uropygio læte sulphureo 3. *C. crocopygia*.

3. *Crithagra albogularis*.

Crithagra albogularis, Smith, S. Afr. Q. J. ii. p. 48 (1833, descr. orig.); Sharpe, Cat. Afr. B. p. 67.

— *Selbyi*, Smith, App. to Rep. of Exp. p. 50 (1836, descr. orig.); Swains. An. in Menag. p. 319 (1837); Layard, B. of S. Afr. p. 219.

— *sulphurata* (juv.), Jard. & Selby, Ill. Orn. pl. 109. fig. 2.

— *cinerea*, Swains. Classif. of B. ii. p. 294 (1837).

Above greyish brown, with dark centres to the feathers, giving a striped appearance; rump and upper tail-coverts greenish yellow; lores and a distinct eyebrow, as well as a spot at the base of the lower mandible, throat, and centre of the belly white; cheeks and sides of the neck, upper part of the breast, and flanks greyish brown; under tail-coverts buffy white; under wing-coverts greyish brown, with a slight yellow tinge; wing-coverts and quills dark brown, with edgings of paler brown; tail-feathers dark brown, edged with dull olive; upper mandible horn-brown, lower mandible flesh-colour; legs dark reddish brown. Total length 6·7 inches, culmen 0·5, wing 3·3, tail 2·6, tarsus 0·8.

I have taken the above description from a specimen given me by Mr. Layard, and procured by that gentleman himself on the Berg River, the exact locality where Sir Andrew Smith obtained his typical examples. We may therefore depend upon having got the true *C. albogularis* of Smith. My species, *C. crocopygia*, is very similar, but smaller, more mealy in plumage, and has a bright sulphur-coloured rump. As there has always been a great confusion respecting this species, owing to the difficulty of consulting Smith's original characters, I subjoin his first description:—

“Above greenish grey, with some dark variegation; rump and tail-coverts greenish yellow; chin, throat, and eyebrows white; breast and flanks dusky grey; centre of belly, vent, and under tail-coverts white; wing and tail-feathers brownish, slightly edged with dull white. Length five inches and a half.” (S. Afr. Q. J. ii. p. 48.)

Again, in the Appendix to the Report of his Expedition (p. 50), Sir Andrew Smith gives the following description of *C. Selbyi*, without the slightest reference to the previous name:—

“Upper parts brown-grey, dashed longitudinally with a dark brown; rump greenish yellow; eyebrows, chin, throat, middle of belly, vent, and under tail-coverts white; breast and sides of belly brown-grey; quills and tail brown. Length 6 inches.”

That Sir Andrew Smith is alluding to the same bird in both the above instances is clear from the fact that to both descriptions he gives a note to the effect that, “although a distinct species, it has been figured by Sir William Jardine and Mr. Selby as the young of *Crithagra sulphurata*.”

Genus SPERMOSPIZA.

4. *Spermospiza hæmatina*.

Loxia hæmatina, Vieill. Ois. Chant. pl. 67 (♂ ad.)

— *guttata*, Vieill. Ois. Chant. pl. 68 (♀ sen.).

Crimson-breasted Grosbeak, Lath. Gen. Syn. v. p. 222, pl. 88* (1822).

Coccothraustes guttata et hæmatina, Bonn. et Vieill. Enc. Méth. iii. p. 1007 (1823).

Fringilla pustulata, Voigt, ed. Cuv. Thierr. i. p. 222 (1830).

Spermophaga cyanorhynchus, Swains. B. of W. Afr. i. p. 164 (1837);

Jard. Contr. Orn. 1849, p. 9.

— *hæmatina*, Jard. & Selby, Ill. Orn. n. s. i. pl. 11 (1837).

Spermospiza hæmatina, Gray, Gen. of B. ii. p. 356 (1844); Hartl. Abhandl.

Naturw. Hamb. ii. p. 31 (1852), et J. f. O. 1854, p. 115, et 1855, p. 361;

Cass. Proc. Phil. Acad. 1858, p. 137; Heine, J. f. O. 1861, p. 142;

Hartl. J. f. O. 1861, p. 257; Gray, Hand-l. of B. ii. p. 49 (1870);

Sharpe, Cat. Afr. B. p. 68 (1871).

— *guttata*, Hartl. J. f. O. 1854, p. 115, et 1855, p. 361; Cass. Proc. Phil.

Acad. 1858, p. 137; Heine, J. f. O. 1861, p. 142; Hartl. J. f. O. 1861,

p. 257; Sharpe, Ibis, 1869, p. 384; Gray, Hand-l. of B. ii. p. 49 (1870).

Both *S. hæmatina* and *S. guttata* were figured by Vieillot originally as different species, as indeed they would appear to any one at first sight to be—the former bird having a black rump, while the latter has a beautiful crimson rump and a spotted breast. It was, however, afterwards discovered that the latter bird was a female, and that the male was jet-black on the breast and upper surface of the body. To *S. hæmatina*, however, no female has ever been discovered, and Dr. Hartlaub, in his standard work on the Birds of Western Africa, says, “Fœm. ignota.” But, on looking through the large series of these birds in my collection, I was able to solve the mystery; for I am now in a position to declare that *S. hæmatina* is nothing but the perfectly adult male of *S. guttata*. The males, before they get fully adult, have black rumps; and the crimson colour is only gradually assumed; for I have now before me examples in which there is no trace of crimson on the rump, some where a slight lustre

is apparent, and some where it is altogether fiery crimson. In the females it is apparently the same; for I have some with blackish rumps, while others show a tinge of crimson, which colour, in the adult birds, extends all over the rump.

XXXI.—*On the Nomenclature of the Foraminifera.* By W. K. PARKER, F.R.S., T. RUPERT JONES, F.G.S., and H. B. BRADY, F.L.S., F.G.S.

[Continued from p. 179.]

97. *Soldania limia*, D'Orb. Pl. VIII. fig. 1.

"*Hammoniaë circulares planissimæ*," &c.; Soldani, Testac. vol. i. pt. 1. p. 62, pl. 53. fig. C. D'Orb. *op. cit.* p. 281. no. 4.

"*Hab.* The Mediterranean."

Without professing quite to understand the details of Soldani's figure, we have little hesitation in regarding this as a variety of *Cornuspira foliacea*. Figs. *A, B, C, D, G, & H*, pl. 47, are also either *Cornuspiræ* or *Spirillinae*. They are of minute size (except fig. *H*), and hence were greatly misunderstood with the imperfect microscopes then in use. Larger specimens of Foraminifera were drawn by Soldani's artists much more true to nature, and often remarkably so.

98. *Soldania orbicularis*, D'Orb. Pl. VIII. fig. 2.

"*Hammonia*;" Soldani, Testac. vol. i. pt. 1. p. 60, pl. 47. fig. H. D'Orb. *op. cit.* p. 281. no. 5.

"*Hab.* The Mediterranean."

Whatever decision may be arrived at with respect to the last-named species must obtain also with this, which has the same characters, save that slight constrictions at the periphery appear to indicate in this form the partial subdivision of one or more turns of the spire into chambers. In both cases the earlier turns of the spire are not septated. With some hesitation, we are disposed to consider this also a subvarietal modification of *Cornuspira*. Possibly the septations have been deepened by the artist.

99. *Soldania annulata*, D'Orb. Pl. VIII. fig. 3.

"*Hammonia trivoluta*;" Soldani, Testac. vol. i. pt. 1. p. 59, pl. 47. fig. C. D'Orb. *op. cit.* p. 282. no. 6.

"*Hab.* The Mediterranean."

Very doubtful; either another aspect of *Cornuspira* or, perhaps, a granular *Spirillina*, in which the exostoses have